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*First Course in Algebra.* By ALBERT HARRY WHEELER, Teacher of Mathematics in the English High School, Worcester, Mass. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1907. Pp. 664. \$1.15.

Few teachers will agree with the author that "this book may be used by students who have completed a course in arithmetic but who have not previously studied algebra," unless the subject is taken late in the high-school course.

The book covers 664 compactly printed pages the unusual length being due partly to the inclusion of a very large number of examples—over 8,000—partly to the presence of topics not ordinarily treated in high-school texts, but chiefly to a rather elaborate analysis of each topic. Much space is given to definitions, including such terms as operand and dimension (literal factor of a term). Sixteen pages are devoted to highest common factor and nine pages to an explanation of long division. A chapter of eighteen pages is devoted to general principles governing transformations of algebraic equations before any work in the solution of equations is given. The first problem involving the use of the equation is solved on p. 177.

The language is too formal to be easily comprehended by the average pupil in the first year of high school; for example: "The resultant effect of several combined positive and negative quantities is equal to the numerical difference between the total positive and total negative effects, and has the quality or nature of the greater total."

Of the 8,000 problems, 3,000 are for mental (oral?) exercise. There is not sufficient variety in the problems to warrant such a large number. A few of the problems are drawn from physics and chemistry, illustrating such topics as chemical composition, falling bodies, the lever, and Boyle's law.

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*First Year in Algebra.* By FREDERICK H. SOMERVILLE. New York: American Book Co., 1905. Pp. 208.

This little book is intended to serve as an introduction to the study of elementary algebra. It includes typical examples, rules, and exercises in the four fundamental processes with integral and fractional expressions, and in the solution of equations in one and two unknown quantities. Only very easy examples are given. With the exception of a few formulas, there are no applications of algebra to real problems. The book will be of service to the teacher who is training grammar-school pupils to perform simple exercises in formal algebraic processes and to solve easy ready-made problems. It will give the pupil little insight into algebra as an instrument of real service and of wider application than arithmetic.

WILLIAM E. STARK

THE ETHICAL CULTURE SCHOOL  
NEW YORK CITY

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*The Pictorial German Course.* By D. J. REES. Edited by HENRY BAUMANN. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1907. Pp. 145. \$0.65.

This book consists of thirty lessons which are based upon the same number of pictures. Each lesson contains a description of a picture, questions based

upon this description, and a lesson in grammar. In the descriptions evidently no attempt has been made to develop the language slowly, as, for instance, to advance from the easy to the difficult; only the subject-matter has been considered. The pictures represent everyday activities beginning with the family in the living-room and ending with the jewelry store.

The grammar lessons seem to have no connection with the reading-matter; it is moreover quite difficult to follow the development of the grammar lesson in itself. In fact it is a little difficult to see the purpose of the book at all. Educationally it is of no value; it might, however, serve to give older students an everyday vocabulary. The book contains also a vocabulary and a list of strong verbs.

A. T. GRONOW

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

*The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages and the Training of Teachers.*

By KARL BREUL. 3d ed. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1906. Pp. 156. \$0.60.

This is a book which every teacher of German or French ought to possess; it is the result of long years of experience, and the information which has been condensed in a little volume of 156 pages is enormous. When, in 1898, the first edition appeared, there was an absolute need for a practical guide for modern-language teachers in the English language. Breul's book satisfied this demand very well. In spite of other publications in that field, since, it kept its place as the best treatment of the subject.

*Goethe's Faust. Erster Teil.* Edited, with Introduction and Commentary,  
By JULIUS GOEBEL. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1907. Pp. 384.

Professor Goebel's Faust edition is a masterpiece of literary research and without doubt one of the best books on German literature ever published in this country. Faust will be read only exceptionally in the fourth year of a high school but every teacher is advised to make himself acquainted with Goebel's Faust edition.

*A German Science Reader.* Edited, with Notes and Vocabulary, by WILLIAM H. WAIT. New York: Macmillan, 1907. Pp. 321. \$1.00.

The reviewer has had an opportunity to use this book for classwork and can heartily recommend it. The selections are well chosen, and notes and vocabulary are excellent. The text consists of short articles on chemistry, physics, geology, mineralogy, astronomy, and anatomy.

A. C. VON NOÉ

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO